

## WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A system for retrieving data distributed across a plurality of storage devices, the system comprising:
  - a plurality of processors, wherein upon receipt of a request for retrieving data, a processor is designated for handling the request; and
  - a switch arranged between the processors and the storage devices, wherein the switch independently routes a request for retrieving data from the designated processor directly to the storage devices containing the requested data and independently routes responses from the storage devices directly to the designated processor.
2. The system of claim 1, further comprising a resource manager for designating a processor to handle a request, based on the load on each processor.
3. The system of claim 1, wherein the switch routes the request for retrieving data based on directory information obtained by the processor.
4. The system of claim 3, wherein the processor obtains the directory information from the storage devices.
5. The system of claim 1, further comprising at least one high speed network connected to the storage devices and arranged between the switch and the storage devices.
6. The system of claim 5, wherein the switch accommodates a plurality of high speed networks and connected storage devices.

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7. The system of claim 5, wherein the high speed network is a fiber channel network, a Small Computer Systems Interface (SCSI) network, or an Ethernet network.

8. The system of claim 1, wherein the data is video stream data.

9. The system of claim 1, wherein the storage devices are disk drives.

10. The system of claim 9, wherein the data is stored in a Redundant Array of Inexpensive Disks (RAID) format among the disk drives.

11. The system of claim 1, further comprising a high speed network for delivering the retrieved data from the designated processor to a client device.

12. The system of claim 11, wherein the high speed network is an Ethernet network, an Asynchronous Transfer Mode (ATM) network, a Moving Pictures Expert Group (MPEG) 2 Transport network, a Quadrature Amplitude Modulated (QAM) cable television network, a Digital Subscriber Loop (DSL) network, a Small Computer Systems Interface (SCSI) network, or a Digital Video Broadcasting – Asynchronous Serial Interface (DVB-ASI) network.

13. A method for retrieving data distributed across a plurality of storage devices, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving a request for retrieving data;

designating a processor for handling the request;

forwarding the request directly from the designated processor to the storage devices containing the data via a switch; and

returning responses from the storage devices directly to the designated processor via the switch, wherein the switch independently routes the request for retrieving data and the responses between the storage devices and the processor.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein the step of designating a processor includes performing load balancing on the processors and designating a processor based on the load balancing.

15. The method of claim 13, wherein the switch routes the request for retrieving data based on directory information obtained by the processor.

16. The method of claim 14, wherein the processor obtains the directory information from the storage devices.

17. The method of claim 13, wherein the request is forwarded from the processor to the storage devices via at least one high speed network connected to the storage devices.

18. The method of claim 17, wherein the switch accommodates a plurality of high speed networks and connected storage devices.

19. The method of claim 17, wherein the high speed network is a fiber channel network, a Small Computer Systems Interface (SCSI) network, or an Ethernet network.

20. The method of claim 13, wherein the data is video stream data.

21. The method of claim 13, wherein the storage devices are disk drives.
22. The method of claim 21, wherein the data is stored in a Redundant Array of Inexpensive Disks (RAID) format among the disk drives.
23. The method of claim 13, further comprising delivering the retrieved data from the designated processor to a client device via a high speed network.
24. The method of claim 23, wherein the high speed network is an Ethernet network, an Asynchronous Transfer Mode (ATM) network, a Moving Pictures Expert Group (MPEG) 2 Transport network, a Quadrature Amplitude Modulated (QAM) cable television network, a Digital Subscriber Loop (DSL) network, a Small Computer Systems Interface (SCSI) network, or a Digital Video Broadcasting – Asynchronous Serial Interface (DVB-ASI) network.
25. A system for storing data across a plurality of storage devices, the system comprising:  
a plurality of processors, wherein upon receipt of a request for storing data, a processor is designated for handling the request; and  
a switch arranged between the processors and the storage devices, wherein the switch independently routes the data to be stored from the designated processor directly to the storage devices.
26. The system of claim 25, further comprising a content manager for loading data to be stored, designating a processor for handling the data storage, and forwarding the data to be stored to the designated processor.

27. The system of claim 25, wherein the switch routes the data to the storage devices based on directory information created by the processor.

28. The system of claim 27, wherein the processor creates the directory information depending on the length and amount of data to be stored on the storage devices.

29. The system of claim 25, further comprising at least one high speed network connected to the storage devices and arranged between the switch and the storage devices.

30. The system of claim 29, wherein the switch accommodates a plurality of high speed networks and connected storage devices.

31. The system of claim 29, wherein the high speed network is a fiber channel network, a Small Computer Systems Interface (SCSI) network, or an Ethernet network.

32. The system of claim 25, wherein the data is video stream data.

33. The system of claim 25, wherein the storage devices are disk drives.

34. The system of claim 33, wherein the data is stored in a Redundant Array of Inexpensive Disks (RAID) format among the disk drives.

35. The system of claim 26, further comprising a high speed network for forwarding the loaded data from the content manager to the designated processor.

36. The system of claim 35, wherein the high speed network is an Ethernet network.

37. A method for storing data across a plurality of storage devices, the method comprising the steps of:  
receiving a request for storing data;  
designating a processor for handling the request; and  
storing data provided by the designated processor on the storage devices via a switch, wherein the switch independently routes the data to be stored directly from the designated processor to the storage devices.

38. The method of claim 37, further comprising loading data to be stored on a content manager that designates a processor for handling the data storage and forwarding the data to be stored to the designated processor.

39. The method of claim 37, wherein the switch routes the data to be stored based on directory information created by the processor.

40. The method of claim 39, wherein the processor creates the directory information depending on the length and the amount of data to be stored.

41. The method of claim 37, wherein the request is forwarded from the processor to the storage devices via at least one high speed network connected to the storage devices.

42. The method of claim 41, wherein the switch accommodates a plurality of high speed networks and connected storage devices.

43. The method of claim 41, wherein the high speed network is a fiber channel network, a Small Computer Systems Interface (SCSI) network, or an Ethernet network.
44. The method of claim 37, wherein the data is video stream data.
45. The method of claim 37, wherein the storage devices are disk drives.
46. The method of claim 45, wherein the data is stored in a Redundant Array of Inexpensive Disks (RAID) format among the disk drives.
47. The method of claim 38, wherein the loaded data is forwarded from the content manager to the designated processor via a high speed network.
48. The method of claim 47, wherein the high speed network is an Ethernet network.
49. A system for retrieving data distributed across a plurality of storage devices, the system comprising:  
a plurality of processors, wherein upon receipt of a request for retrieving data, a processor is designated for handling the request; and  
a switch arranged between the processors and the storage devices, wherein the switch independently routes a request for retrieving data from the designated processor directly to the storage devices containing the requested data, based on directory information obtained by the processor from the storage devices, and independently routes responses from the storage devices directly to the designated processor.

50. A method for retrieving data distributed across a plurality of storage devices, the method comprising the steps of:

- receiving a request for retrieving data;
- designating a processor for handling the request;
- forwarding the request directly from the designated processor to the storage devices containing the data via a switch, wherein the switch independently routes the request for retrieving data to the storage devices based on directory information obtained by the processor from the storage devices; and
- returning responses from the storage devices directly to the designated processor via the switch, wherein the switch independently routes the responses from the storage devices to the processor.

51. A system for storing data across a plurality of storage devices, the system comprising:

- a plurality of processors, wherein upon receipt of a request for storing data, a processor is designated for handling the request; and
- a switch arranged between the processors and the storage devices, wherein the switch independently routes the data to be stored from the designated processor directly to the storage devices, based on directory information created by the processor depending on the data to be stored on the storage devices.

52. A method for storing data across a plurality of storage devices, the method comprising the steps of:

- receiving a request for storing data;
- designating a processor for handling the request; and
- storing data provided by the designated processor on the storage devices



via a switch, wherein the switch independently routes the data to be stored directly from the designated processor to the storage devices based on directory information created by the processor depending on the data to be stored.

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